



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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AMERICAN TUNA PACK SETS RECORD

The American tuna pack for 1958 was the largest in history, the Department of the Interior announced today. Record consumption is also indicated.

Data supplied by the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, place the total pack at 14,300,000 cases compared with the previous record of 11,900,000 cases packed in 1957. The pack is produced from American-caught tuna and tuna imported, primarily from Japan, for canning.

Imports of tuna already canned were 2,300,000 cases, also a record for imported canned tuna. This means that 16,600,000 cases of tuna were made available to the American consumer during the year. Preliminary figures indicate that tuna consumption in the United States during 1958 was well over 15,000,000 cases.

Stocks on hand at the end of the year were greater than a year earlier, but it appears that most of the gain in production and imports was consumed during the year. In a study made by the Bureau in 1953 it was estimated that it would be 1960 before tuna consumption reached the 15,000,000 case mark.

Bureau records also show that not only has the total amount of tuna canned each year increased but that in recent years tuna has displaced salmon as the No. 1 canned fish on a per capita consumption basis. In 1925 the tuna pack reached a million cases for the first time. In 1935 it was twice that figure and in 1945 it had again doubled. In 1950 the pack was just short of 9,000,000 cases. Data for 1957 show that the supply of tuna was 1.61 pounds per capita, that of salmon 1.01 pounds and for sardines .46 pounds.

The catch of tuna landed in continental United States in 1958 was 314,000,000 pounds, or 17,000,000 pounds more than in 1957 but far below the record landings of 1950 when American tuna fishermen brought 390 million pounds of tuna into American ports. The amount of frozen tuna imported for canning purposes in 1958 is not yet known but during the first ten months of the year tuna imports totaled 162,000,000 pounds compared with 139,000,000 during all of 1957.

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